Teaching In Harmony With The Fitrah

By
ʿAbdurraḥmān bnu Mīhūb al-Qaddārī

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

As parents and teachers, we carry the responsibility of shaping young minds and hearts.

We want our children to recognize what is right, love what is true, and develop the ability to distinguish guidance from misguidance.

We strive to nurture their curiosity and plant seeds (foundations) of knowledge that take root, so they can grow into individuals who act from understanding rather than mere imitation.

For that, it helps to remember that children are born upon the fitrah (sound nature), naturally attuned to what is right and what is wrong. They sense harmony and dissonance instinctively, even before they can explain it. When something clashes with their nature, they often feel it before they understand it.

Allāh made the Sharīʿah in harmony with the fitrah He placed in us.

﴿ فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ ٱللَّهِ ٱلَّتِى فَطَرَ ٱلنَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ ٱللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلدِّينُ ٱلْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ ٱلنَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

> "So set your face firmly toward the religion as a ḥanīf—the fiṭrah of Allāh upon which He has created mankind. There is no altering the creation of Allāh. That is the upright religion, but most people do not know" [Ar-Rūm: 30].

Al-Imām as-Saʿdī says:

> This command that We have given you is "the fiṭrah of Allāh upon which He has created mankind". He has placed in their minds its goodness and the repugnance of what contradicts it.

Allāh has placed in the hearts of all creation an inclination toward all the outward and inward rulings of the Sharīʿah. He has placed in their hearts love for the truth and preference for the truth, and this is the reality of the fiṭrah.

Whoever departs from this foundation does so due to an external factor that affects his fiṭrah and corrupts it, as the Prophet, ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallam, said: “Every child is born upon the fiṭrah; then his parents make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian”.

“There is no altering the creation of Allāh”, meaning, no one can alter Allāh’s creation by making the created being upon other than the disposition Allāh has placed him upon.

Why am I highlighting this for you?

First, feeling uneasy about a concept in Islām is almost always the result of misunderstanding,

whether deliberate or accidental. That misunderstanding creates a clash with the fitrah. Second, in children, this clash can be quiet or forceful.

This is why striving to educate oneself is so important. Teaching a distorted or deficient understanding does not remain neutral—it creates internal friction. The child may not argue, but the discomfort quietly settles within.

In other words: The default in human beings is accepting the teachings of Islām, if the child exhibits signs of rebellion or being annoyed, that’s your sign to check which piece of the puzzle is out of place. Fix it, and the rest of the pieces will naturally align, inshāʾ Allāh.

How do you find that piece and correct it? Through knowledge, education, practice, and sharing.

Another important principle is restraint. Do not force upon children what Allāh did not make obligatory. Allāh commanded what is required and encouraged what is virtuous, and He is All-Wise. This distinction exists for a reason.

﴿فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ ٱلشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ

فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَۗ يُرِيدُ ٱللَّهُ بِكُمُ ٱلْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ ٱلْعُسْرَ﴾

> "So whoever of you sights the month, he must observe fasts that month, and whoever is ill or on a journey, the same number [of days which one did not observe fasts must be made up] from other days. Allāh intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you" [Al-Baqarah: 185].

When something encouraged is imposed as if it were obligatory, it crosses limits that Allāh, out of

mercy, did not impose. What was meant to nurture can become a burden. What was meant to draw closer can push away.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ "إِنَّ الدِّينَ يُسْرٌ، وَلَنْ يُشَادَّ الدِّينَ أَحَدٌ إِلاَّ غَلَبَهُ، فَسَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا، وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالْغَدْوَةِ وَالرَّوْحَةِ وَشَىْءٍ مِنَ الدُّلْجَةِ".

> From Abū Hurayra, from the Prophet, ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallam, who said: "Religion is ease, and no one overburdens himself in religion except that it overwhelms him. So aim straight, draw near, embrace glad tidings, and make use of the morning, the afternoon, and a portion of the night".

Teach obligations clearly. Encourage virtues gently. Let the Sharīʿah remain proportionate, as Allāh

made it. This preserves both understanding and fitrah.

But I’m Not Perfect!

Of course. This is not a call to perfection. Parents are not expected to be scholars, nor to never make mistakes. Error is human, and children can tolerate mistakes when they come with honesty. Allāh does not hold us accountable for honest mistakes made while sincerely doing our best.

﴿ لَا يُكَلِّفُ ٱللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا
ٱكْتَسَبَتْ ۗ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَآ إِن نَّسِينَآ أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ
عَلَيْنَآ إِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُۥ عَلَى ٱلَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا
طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِۦ ۖ وَٱعْفُ عَنَّا وَٱغْفِرْ لَنَا وَٱرْحَمْنَآ ۚ أَنتَ مَوْلَىٰنَا فَٱنصُرْنَا
عَلَى ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴾

“Allāh burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has

earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. "Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error, our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us; our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Pardon us and grant us Forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our Mawlā (Patron, Supporter and Protector, etc.) and give us victory over the disbelieving people” [Al-Baqarah: 286].

We’re on an icy road. We will slip. Hold fast. Aim straight, draw near, and embrace glad tidings.

May Allāh grant us and you beneficial knowledge, and benefit us through it.

May Allāh grant you barakah in your offspring.